[Translation]

Damage to Small Water Channels and Water Mills in Himachal Pradesh

3486. PROF. PREM DHUMAL: Will the Minister of WATER RESOURCES be pleased to state:

(a) whether any damage has been caused to small water channels and water mills in Himachal Pradesh by the Shah Nahar Project;

(b) if so, whether the Government of Himachal Pradesh has made any request to the Union Government in this regard;

(c) if so, the details thereof; and

(d) the reaction of the Union Government thereto?

THE MINISTER OF WATER RESOURCES (SHRI VIDYACHARAN SHUKLA): (a) Shah Nahar Barrage was constructed in 1983 by Government of Punjab on river Beas downstream of Pong Dam for diversion of water to Mukerian Hydel Channel. A small portion of the barrage falls within the territory of Himachal Pradesh. Due to construction of the barrage, there was some disruption of supplies to existing 'Kuhls' (small water channels) and some 'Gharats' (water mills) were also rendered inoperative.

On 4.8.83, an agreement was signed between the Governments of Punjab and Himachal Pradesh according to which Punjab agreed to supply, on a regular basis without payment of any cost, 228 cusec of water, to bear the cost of the lined carrier channel for irrigating an area of 3465 hectares which were already receiving irrigation prior to the construction of Shah Nahar Barrage, to share the cost of such channels with Himachal Pradesh in the potentially irrigable area of 11822 ha. and to pay suitable compensation for 60 numbers of 'Gharats' (water mills) rendered inoperative.

(b) to (d). The issue relating to compensation for water mills, land and crops is under mutual discussion between the two State Government and no request has been made to the Union Government in this regard.

[English]

Commonwealth Ministers Conference

3487. SHRI P.M. SAYEED: Will the Minister of AGRICULTURE be pleased to state:

(a) whether the recent Commonwealth Ministers Conference held at Rome was attended by him; and

(b) if so, the main points discussed regarding agricultural situation in the country at present?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF AGRICULTURE (SHRI MULLAPPALLY RAMACHANDRAN): (a) and (b): Yes, Sir. The meeting discussed important issues concerning the World Food and Agriculture Situation, implications of recent advancements in technology for agriculture and strategies for enhancing investments in agriculture, with special focus on the Commonwealth Countries including India.

Exploration of Iron Ore in Kudachadri Hills, Karnataka

3488. SHRI G. MADEGOWDA: Will the Minister of STEEL be pleased to state:

(a) whether any survey has been conducted for locating iron ore at Kudachadri Hills in Karnataka;